

Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3109

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MOSCOW 6573

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJ: PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF GRECHKO'S DEATH

REF: MOSCOW 6423

1. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, FIRST SOVIET MEDIA REPORT OF GRECHKO'S DEATH WAS ON 9:00 P.M. TV NEWS PROGRAM "VREMYA" APRIL 26 (ALTHOUGH WE HAVE ONE UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT SOVIET RADIO "MAYAK" MADE BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENT AT 4:00 P.M. APRIL 26). IN ANY CASE, "VREMYA" APPARENTLY PROVIDED FIRST DETAILED COVERAGE.

2. THE PROGRAM BEGAN WITH ANNOUNCER READING BRIEF STATEMENT OF CPSU CC, PRESIDUM OF SUPREME SOVIET AND COUNCIL OF MINISTERS THAT GRECHKO HAD DIED. ANNOUNCER NEXT READ LENGTHY OBITUARY. THEN CAME CC AND CM DECREE ON BURIAL (COMMISSION CONSISTS OF USTINOV, GRISHIN, KAPITONOV, L.V. SMIRNOV, GENERALS YAKUBOVSKIY, KULIKOV, AND SOKOLOV, AND M.P. GEORGADZE, GRECHKO WILL BE BURIED AT THE KREMLIN WALL) AND ANNOUNCEMENT THAT PUBLIC MAY BID FAREWELL TO GRECHKO ON APRIL 28, FROM 10:00 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M., AT THE HALL OF COLUMNS IN CENTRAL MOSCOW.

3. FINALLY, ANNOUNCER READ MEDICAL REPORT ON CAUSE

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OF DEATH (A SUDDENT DEATH, RELATED TO "SHARP DISTURBANCE

OF CORONARY BLOOD CIRCULATION" THE NIGHT OF APRIL 25-26, PRECEDED BY LONG HISTORY OF ARTERIOSCLEROSIS AND HEART AILMENT). NEWS PROGRAM THEN PROCEEDED TO OTHER, UNRELATED ITEMS.

4. PRAVDA AND OTHER CENTRAL NEWSPAPERS CARRY BRIEF CC/SS/CM ANNOUNCEMENT OF DEATH, PLUS CC/CM DECREE AT BOTTOM OF FIRST PAGE, WITH OBITUARY AND LARGE PICTURE OF GRECHKO, ALONG WITH MEDICAL REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF PUBLIC FAREWELL, ON PAGE TWO. MILITARY PAPER RED STAR FOLLOWED THIS FORMAT, WITH EXCEPTION OF ADDITIONAL, BRIEF FRONT PAGE ANNOUNCEMENT OF GRECHKO'S DEATH FROM MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND MAIN POLITICAL DIRECTORATE OF SOVIET ARMY AND NAVY TO PERSONNEL OF THE SOVIET ARMED FORCES.
STOESSEL

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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